

FIREMAN'S JOURNAL

A Weekly Chronicle of the Fire Department, Military, Masonic, Tact, Field Sports, Regattas, Hunting, Angling, Theatrical, and General News of California.

VOL. VIII—NO. 12,

SAN FRANCISCO: SATURDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 18, 1858.

WHOLE NO. 194

CHARLES M. CHASE, Proprietor.

OUR TASK—TO ENLIGHTEN

(TERMS, One Year, \$5; Six Months, \$3.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY
BY CHARLES M. CHASE.

AT SHERMAN'S BUILDING,
North East corner Clay and Montgomery streets.

TERMS FIFTY CENTS PER MONTH.

THE FIREMAN'S JOURNAL AND MILITARY GAZETTE is published every Saturday morning, and served to City Subscribers at Fifty Cents per month, payable to the Carriers. It will also be mailed for six months for \$3.00 or \$5.00 a year payable in advance.

Communications connected with the Editorial department, to be addressed to the editor, post paid—on business to the Publishers.

No attention whatever will be paid to anonymous communications. Any person wishing articles published in the "Journal" must accompany them with the name of the author.

Advertisements will be inserted at the lowest rates. All descriptions of Job Printing attended to promptly.

POETRY.

The following beautiful lines were found in the *Louisville Journal*, and are anonymous:

My soul the secret image keeps,
My midnight dreams are all of thee!
For nature then in silence sleeps,
And silence broods o'er land and sea;
Oh in that still, mysterious hour,
How oft from waking dreams I start,
To find thee, but a fancy's fire,
Thou cherished idol of my heart;
Thou hast each thought and dream of mine—
Have I in turn one thought of thine?

Forever thine my dreams shall be,
What e'er be my fortune here;
I ask not love—I claim thee,
Only one boon—the tribute of a tear;
My e'er blest visions from above
Play gleefully round thy happy heart,
And the sweet beams of peace and love
Never from thy heart depart.
Farewell! my dreams are still of thee—
Hast thou one tender thought of me?

My joys like summer birds may fly,
My hopes, like summer blossoms depart,
But there's one flower that cannot die,
Thy holy memory in my heart;
No dew that one flower's cup may fill,
No sunlight to its leaves be given,
But it will live and flourish still,
As deathless as the thing of heaven;
My soul greets thee, unasked, unsought,
Hast thou for me one single thought?

Farewell! farewell, my far off friend!
Between us, broad blue rivers flow,
And forests wave and plains extend,
And mountains in the sunlight glow;
The wind that breathes upon thy brow
Is not the wind that breathes on mine;
The star-beams shining on thee now
Are not the beams that shine on mine;
But memory's spell is with me yet—
Canst thou the holy part forget?

The bitter tears that thou and I,
May shed when'er by anguish bowed,
Exalted in the noontide sky,
May meet and mingle in the cloud;
And thus my much loved friend, though we
Far, far apart, must live and move,
Our souls when God shall set them free,
Can mingle in the world of love;
This was extasy to me—
Say would it be a joy to thee?

HORACE VERNET IN HIS STUDIO.—This illustrious painter of battle-pieces is really a colonel in the National Guard, but so strong is his sympathy with the military subject he so marvelously illustrates, that he believes himself destined some day to head a campaign, if not become a marshal of France. I once had the good luck to see this great artist at work. He was painting the battle of Isly, and no one was present save the celebrated Isabey and myself. The picture was of immense dimensions, and Vernet stood on a ladder painting, which he descended rapidly every few minutes, and running off some twenty yards, eyed the effect, talking volubly all the time. His finest touches were given with astonishing celerity, and Isabey was constantly thrown into ecstasies of admiration. To see Vernet paint, whilst Isabey criticised, was a treat not to be met with every day.—A *New Yorker* in the *Foreign Office*.

NOVEL GAS HEATER.—A new fuel-saving apparatus is described as an iron box full of sand, into which a jet of gas is passed. If the gas is directed into the sand, it will instantly diffuse itself through the mass, and rising to the surface, may with perfect safety be instantly set on fire, the flame covering the surface of the sand with a pure flame without smoke, no matter how large the extent of the flame, and with perfect and complete combustion. The heat is almost instantaneously diffused through the sand, heating it equally throughout, and requiring but one minute to raise such an intense temperature that it will retain its heat for several hours after the gas is shut off and the lights extinguished. The gas required to light the room will also be sufficient to heat it. By this sand and gas stove it is claimed that two cents worth of gas will furnish enough caloric to heat a room eight hours.

TAKING TWO OF THEM.—A beautiful youth was paying marked attention to a beautiful young lady who rejoices in the possession of an interesting niece of about six years. The other evening he was enjoying a social chat with the young lady, vainly trying to nerve himself to ask the terrible question, when the little niece entered the room. A new thought struck him—taking her on his knee, he asked in a quivering voice:
"Fanny, dear, are you willing that I should have your aunt for my own? I will give you five hundred dollars for her."
"Oh! yes!" said the little one clapping her hands in glee; but hadn't you better give me a thousand dollars and take two of them?"
It is needless to say that the little fairy's answer overcame all restraint, and the happy day was soon fixed. Little Fanny is now a great favorite with both of them.—*Exchange*.

The Frigate's Tender.

It was early on a sunny morning during the progress of the last war with Great Britain, that a young naval officer, walking on the Battery at New York, had his attention drawn to a group of persons earnestly engaged in watching two vessels, that were just visible down the harbor.

"What is it, my friends?" he asked in a frank, hearty tone, as he joined them.

"The tender, again, chasing in a schooner, sir," answered an old tar, touching the point of his hat, as he noticed the anchor button on the officer's coat.

"Here is a spy-glass, sir," said the master's mate, who stood near, at the same time respectfully handing it to him.

"Thank you, my man," answered the lieutenant, with a smile, as he took the instrument and placed it to his eye.

By its aid he could clearly distinguish an armed schooner of about ninety tons, crowding sail in chase of a trading fore-and-aft, that was making every exertion to escape, both by towing and wetting her sails.

"The chase is about half a mile ahead, sir," said the master's mate, "but the tender sails like a shark in chase of a dolphin. The fore-and-aft don't stand any chance of getting in past the fort."

"The tender can sail, and I am one that ought to know it," said a stout weather-beaten man. "She was a pilot-boat, and the fastest craft that ever danced over the water. Three weeks ago, I and my crew were out in her, when you English frigate suddenly made her appearance out of a fog bank, and brought us to. But I took to my yawl, and made for the land, a league away, and escaped; for the fog was so thick that the Englishman could not get a glimpse of me. It is my schooner they have turned into a tender, sir, and that has made so many captures in the last three weeks, of our coasters."

"She carries forty men and a long thirty-two, as I hear," observed a seaman in the group.

"And is commanded by a luff and a reefer," added the master's mate.

"It would be a blessing," observed a man-of-war's man, who had not yet spoken, "if that craft could be caught napping. It ain't safe for a sloop to put her nose out of the harbor, beyond the cape; but while the frigate was there alone, they could slip along in light water, and show her their heels. But now everything that ventures out is brought to by the long gun of the tender."

"That's a fact, Ben," responded another seaman. "She has taken, or driven back in port, no less than twenty-six craft during the last three weeks. I shall be glad for one, when our frigate laying off there gets her armament on board; for then I think we'll swallow the English frigate outside, and pick our teeth with the tender."

All these remarks were heard by the young officer, who all the while continued to look through the glass at the tender and her chase.

"There goes a gun!" cried several of the spectators, as a flash and a jet of smoke came from the tender's bows.

"That's bold enough," observed the young officer, as if speaking his thoughts aloud; "the impudent tender is almost up to the fort, and dares to fire at the chase in the very face of the batteries."

"It's only to try and do her mischief, sir," said the master's mate, "for she finds the fore-and-aft will escape her, so she fires a gun to cut away something."

"You are right, my man," responded the officer, "for she has put about and stands seaward again."

He continued to watch the retiring tender for some moments in silence.

"It's a pity we haven't an armed cutter in port that could sail faster than she can, so that we might give her a chase out," said a lad approaching the group. His dress was that of a passed midshipman, and his air singularly free and careless.

"Ah, Frank, are you here?" said the lieutenant. "Come aside with me," said he, putting his arm in that of the midshipman. "I have conceived a plan for capturing the tender."

"In what way, sir?" asked the youth.

"I will show you. The tender's game appears to be the coasting vessels, from which she takes men to impress in the British navy, and also plunders the craft of such things as they contain which are of any value. My plan is to charter an old sloop, the worst looking one it is possible to find in port, yet a tolerable good sailer, for she must work well and readily obey her helm. I will load her deck with hencoops filled with poultry, pens filled with pigs, a few sheep, and a calf or two by way of variety."

"You laugh, Frank, but the commander of the tender will find it no laughing matter, if I succeed as I anticipate. I will ship about thirty-five men, and conceal them in the hold; and taking command of my craft, with only one hand visible on deck, I shall set sail out of the harbor. When I get outside, I think I shall show John Bull a Yankee trick he will not be likely to forget very soon. But all will depend on your good management of the affair. Now you see what I would be at, Frank. Will you join me?"

"Heart and hand, sir!" responded Frank Talbot, with enthusiasm.

"Now we want to proceed at once to action,"

said the lieutenant. "I want you to proceed at once to the Anchor rendezvous, in Pearl street, and drum up about five and thirty men. Take only those that are daring and ready for anything. Let none of them know your intention lest we should be betrayed by information being conveyed to the tender. You will find enough in these times that will ask no questions. Meet me at twelve o'clock, at the Exchange Rooms, and report to me."

The midshipman then took his leave, and hastened up the Battery. The lieutenant returned to the group, and taking aside the master's mate, whom he knew, briefly laid before him his project. The old tar entered into it with all zeal. Together they went to the docks, where on account of the blockade, lay idle a large number of vessels of all descriptions. They were not long in discovering such a craft as suited them—a Hudson sloop of seventy tons. She was immediately put in trim for sailing by the master's mate and three or four men whom he employed, while the officer proceeded to buy up and send on board his live stock.

The morning following these events the tender of the British frigate was standing off and on under easy sail, and close in with Sandy Hook. The wind was from the South, and blowing about a five knot breeze. The sky was without a cloud, and only a gentle undulation lifted the surface of the ocean. The tender was a clipper built vessel, very narrow in the beam, and constructed wholly with an eye to her fast sailing qualities; and she gave proof of them by overhauling everything. She carried amidships a long thirty-two pounder. Her crew consisted of about thirty men in the uniform of the British navy. They were now principally assembled in the bow and on the windlass, talking together, or watching the shore. Aft, the officer of the deck, a bluff, full-faced young English midshipman, was lounging over the quarter-railing, smoking a cigar. The man at the helm had a sincere air of his post, for the vessel tripped along so easily that she seemed to steer herself.

"Where away?" quickly demanded the officer of the deck.

"In shore, two points forward the beam," "Aye, aye, I see," answered the midshipman, leveling his glass at a sloop just stealing out of the harbor, closely hugging the shore. "It's another of those Yankee coasters. A sail in shore, Mr. Stanley," said he, speaking through the open skylight.

The lieutenant, a stout, fleshy-visaged John Bull, came on deck and took a good sight at the stranger, who was about a league distant.

"It is a lumber sloop, and we will bring her in, if she dares venture out; for we may get some fresh provisions and vegetables from her, if nothing more."

"Shall I put her on the other tack, sir?" asked the midshipman.

"Not yet. If we can run as we until the sloop gets an opening. Keep on for her now, she will soon take refuge in the harbor," replied the lieutenant.

The sloop stood out for half an hour, and then hauling her wind, bent down along the land. The tender delayed her chase till she had got too far from the harbor to get back again, and then putting about, ran for her so as to cut her off. The sloop seemed to take the alarm, and putting about, began to make the best of her way to the harbor she had left.

Confident of the speed of his own vessel, the English lieutenant felt satisfied that the chase was already his, and laughed at the efforts of the sloop to get away.

At length they came near enough to see that her decks were covered with poultry.

"A rare haul we shall make this morning," said the midshipman. "Enough of chicken-pie for the whole crew, to say nothing of the turkey and roast pig for the cabin."

"What a regular all-sides Yankee skipper she has at the helm. Man and boy, she has a stout crew!" said the lieutenant, laughing.

"They look frightened out of their senses as they begin to think they are gone for it. Sloop ahoy!"

"What ye want?" came across the water in the strong nasal of Yankeeedom.

"I want you to heave to, brother Jonathan."

"I'd rather not, if it's all the same to you—I'm in a mighty hurry!" was the reply.

"Frank," added the other disguised officer, in an undertone, "when I order you to let go the job you must draw it off as hard as your strength will let you. I at the same time will put the helm hard up, so that the sloop will pay rapidly off, and fall aboard of the tender; for I'm determined to talk aboard of her. I shall curse your blunders, and order you to let go; but do not mind me; keep hauling the jibsheet hard to the windward. Leave the rest to me. Now my men," he said, speaking through the companion-way, "take a good grasp of your cutlasses and pistols. When I stamp my foot on the deck over your heads, throw off the hatches, leap on deck and follow me!"

"Heave to or I'll sink you! What are you palavering about?" shouted the Englishman.

"Well, don't be too free with your powder, and I will. Amintadab, let go that jib-sheet."

"Yes, I will," answered the young reefer; and with a hearty will he began to draw it to the windward at the same moments as the American officer put the helm hard up, and the sloop rapidly paid off right towards the tender.

"Let go that jib-sheet," shouted the English officer.

"Yes, Amintadab, you tarnation fool, you, let it go, I say! Let it go! Don't you see we are coming right aboard the captain's vessel?"

But Amintadab pulled the harder, and fairly took a turn with the sheet about a belaying pin.

The English officer was about to pour out a volley of oaths, when seeing that the sloop would certainly fall foul of him, he turned to give orders for the protection of his own vessel; but ere he could utter them, the sloop's bow struck her near the fore-rigging, and they both swung round, stern with stern. At the same instant, the American officer stamped on the deck, and forty men made their appearance from the hatches, fore-cabin, and cabin, and leaped after Percival upon the tender's decks.

The Englishman, taken by surprise surrendered without scarcely striking a blow; and getting both vessels under sail in the very sight of the frigate, the gallant young captain sailed with his prize back into the harbor, and safely anchored her off the Battery, after an absence of six hours and twenty-seven minutes.

This exploit is doubtless one of the boldest and most spirited affairs that came off during the war, and the account given above is a faithful narrative of the transaction.

JOHN CHINAMAN'S WAY OF FIGHTING.—I have seen says a letter-writer, the arms used by the Chinese in the fight at the storming of the ports at the mouth of the Pei-Ho. The first sight of them shows the utter helplessness of this vast empire of 350,000,000 of population, when it comes into contact with European science and arms, and discipline, on the battle field. They remind me of the scenes of my boyhood, when all the lads of my country village were armed with wooden guns, furnished with wooden locks and flints, which could snap if they could not fire. They are ignorant of the rifle, the percussion cap, and even of the flint, once used in its place. The gun is a matchlock, and of such formidable dimensions and weight, as to need wheels to carry it instead of their own shoulders. It is almost impossible to raise and level it, such is its weight; and often another man, kneeling before him, who loads and fires, bears the end of the gun upon his shoulder, in the happy consciousness that if the enemy chooses to kill him instead of the soldier at the other end of the gun, he is innocent of any man's blood, and could not but be. And these matchlocks! they are worthy of a place in any antiquarian museum. Almost would the old Knights Templars of Malta start up again, should these matchlock guns be placed in the gallery beside their armor. The matchlock in cumbersome is fairly in keeping with the barrel and stock; some inflexible material, which is kept burning, taking the place of a flint in a common gun, and coming down like the tail of a comet when the tedious process of loading is completed. Then there is the spear, to be used by the hand in fight, but slender and armed with an iron point, and fired with rockets. Then comes the battle-axe, not heavy, and easily wielded by the hand, but useless, except in close contact, and then powerless compared with sword and bayonet. Their cannon are either sunk in the earth, and permanently leveled, or else mounted on carriages which provide for no elevation or depression of the guns, or else make it so slow and difficult that after all the carriages are useless. In the attack on the forts, one of the steam gun-boats came within range of the guns, and received several shots. Very strangely a d'umkee soldier and a gentleman, as John Chinamen thought, the Englishman did not choose to remain in range, and presto! with a puff of steam was out of reach of their guns, though almost touching their nozzles.

CHANGES IN FASHION.—It is astonishing how mankind "improves." To-day we are ashamed of our simplicity of yesterday. Every fashionable young lady thinks she has the unbounded right to laugh at the ludicrous head-dresses and absurd hoops worn at her mother's marriage; that mother laughed at the fashion of her mother's youth; and the last did not fail to pay the same compliment to the manners and customs of the generation before her time.

In nothing else, it would seem, however, has the human race made so little real advancement with so much change, as in dress. In a few years our children will crack pleasant jokes about our stove-pipe head-pieces which we denominated hats, and other grotesque fashions of this age. They at the same time will fall into styles equally ludicrous, never dreaming that they are preparing to be laughed at by their irreverent children, in their turn. For instance, what a capital jest will be the present cut of pantaloons for the dandies of the next generation. To-day Jack Fopling's legs look like ill-made rake handles, covered tightly with odd-looking stuffs, checked, striped and colored in the worst possible taste. Thirty years from this date Jack Fopling, jun., will walk about in bags open at the bottom; or adopt the Turkish trousers—sacks looped up about the ankles.

Once in a great while, there is an attempt made to return for something like simplicity in costume. Coats are cut plain, bounces are abolished, corset strings are loosened, sober colors are worn; but the next season some ingenious tailor introduces a quaint device in vest patterns, which "takes immensely," milliners and dressmakers are not backward in introducing changes; skirts extend in society, and bustles arise. So we go.—*Exchange Paper*.

"John," said a victimized husband, "how I wish it was as much the fashion to trade wires as it is to trade horses."

"Why so, Pete?"

"I'd cheat somebody most shocking bad before night."

Captain Billy and the Bear.

Captain Billy Tregear was bound on the *visite de rigueur* to London Church Town. Captain Billy would seem to have been in more comfortable circumstances, or he may have been simply more luxurious and extravagant than the listless Jemmy. At any rate, Captain Billy traveled by mail, not by wagon, outside, as a matter of course.

Billy sat behind the coachman, in company with three rather unusual coach passengers. But as any kind of coach or passenger would have been unusual to Billy, he perhaps saw no more singularity in them than in the rest of his fellow-travelers. They were certainly not the kind of people one is in the habit of meeting in mixed society. One of them was an Italian showman. His companions were a bear and a monkey.

Captain Billy accepted their companionship cheerfully, as a perfectly natural and legitimate incident in his above-ground experiences.

At the outset of my story I confess there is a sort of Alpine or Rubicon barrier of improbability, which the reader may perhaps find some difficulty in getting over. But he is requested to make an effort, with the assurance that this obstacle surmounted, he will find the rest of our journey comparatively plain sailing. He must make an effort then, to believe—as implicitly, if possible, as I myself did when I first heard the story—that Captain Billy Tregear, either from a defective knowledge of mankind or from an impaired vision, the result of having had the sun too much in his eyes, whether in the literal or the metaphorical sense (both cases being possible to a Cornish miner just come above ground for a holiday) mistook the bear for a human being, outlandish perhaps and taciturn, but undeniably human.

You must bear continually in mind that Captain Billy had risen from the ranks to his present distinction in the depths of a tin mine.—What could he know about man and beast in the upper sunlit world? I could point out a score of gentlemen—either of whom, happening to be Billy's traveling companion on the occasion, might easily have been mistaken by Billy for a bear. Is it then a wonder the simple, untutored Cornishman should have mistaken a bear for a gentleman?

I fear, in order to make my story at all probable (the difficulty enlarges as I approach it), I must fall back upon and cling to the hypothesis that Captain Billy had mounted the coach in a hazy and muzzy condition, and had also come armed with a case-bottle, after the manner of sagacious travelers; that he could not have been in a state to judge by ocular demonstration of the outlines of his fellow-passengers; that he was merely aware of a dark, huddled-up figure of some kind sitting peacefully beside him, whose outer and tangible garment appeared to be of a furry texture, and that Billy—as a natural consequence of his assumed condition—was disposed to be sociable and communicative.

The legend proceeds to state, that Billy made several unsuccessful attempts to engage the bear in conversation.

We have hinted that the bear was taciturn.—There was every excuse for his observing this apparently childish demeanor. In the first place, he was naturally ignorant of the English language. In the second, he labored under the physical disadvantage of being muzzled. Billy, it may be fairly supposed, was not able to notice this inconvenience; or it is probable that he would have treated the bear with greater consideration than he did.

However, it took a long time to offend Billy. He wanted to talk. Having exhausted general topics—in which the stranger might be naturally indisposed to take an interest—the gallant, but perhaps (well, yes, he must have been, so let us consider the matter settled) intoxicated captain proceeded to more personal questions. It struck him that he would start a delicate compliment to his neighbor's taste and judgment in dress. Now to withstand that kind of blandishment one must be a bear indeed!

"Famous top-coat that o' yours, sir," said Billy, admiringly smoothing the bear's left shoulder. "Beautiful top-coat, to be sure."

The bear may have thought so too; but, as has been shown, there were insurmountable obstacles to his expressing an opinion upon that or any other subject.

Good sort of coat that for the pits, pursued the undaunted Billy. "Water 'd trickle off it just the very thing like off a mole's back.—Wouldn't it now?"

The bear was obstinately silent, and here, I think, he was to blame. He might have grunted at least.

Billy was not yet beaten. He pursued: "Excuse my freedom, sir, as a poor man and a perfect stranger; but might I ask what would be the cost of a top-coat like that, for I should like to have one, if within means?"

Still the bear didn't say a word.

Captain Billy was now fairly huffed. Human blood is apt to get warm down in these gaseous tin mines, and Billy felt this was a poor return for his persistent civility. He opened and shut his hands, loosened his biceps muscles, and clutched the air as if meditating vengeance, in a Cornish manner, at the earliest opportunity.

Having grasped and thrown a few imaginary foes over the back of the coach, and feeling himself in training for any encounter, Billy deliberately proceeded to provoke the bear by insult.

He spoke at that unoffending personage in the third person.

"Well! I ain't a judge of breeding, perhaps, but it ain't my idea of a gentleman!"

Billy was quite right. The bear was no gentleman.

The showman here interposed. He fully understood the state of the case, which he had watched from its commencement. Nursing his monkey affectionately in his lap (and winking at the coachman and passengers), he said to Captain Billy—in pretty good English—with a mischievous Italian smile—

"You must not be offended with him. He is a Russian."

"Tooshan, eh?" said Billy, rather exasperated than pacified by the explanation. "Brave, ugly chap, sure he is, too. Can he wrestle?"

"Oh, yes; the Russians are very fine wrestlers," said the Italian.

"Well, there's wusslers in Cornwall, too!" The wrathful captain clutched the air as he spoke.

"You had better not try with him," the showman went on. "He has one terrible grip!"

"So they said of the Westmoreland man last winter, but I threw him over my head, and could have done it with my hat on!"

"Ah! but the Russians have one hug of their own!"

"So've we; and it's thought a good 'un," said Billy, tartly.

And then I think Billy must have sought solace in the case-bottle, and fallen asleep, murmuring contemptuous defiance against the Russian nation collectively.

History at any rate insists upon the fact, that at the first halting place Captain Billy, on descending, staggering or tumbling from the roof of the coach, knocked against his late neighbor, the bear, lately assisted by his master in descending to terra firma, to the admiration of numerous bystanders, and became indignant at what he conceived to be a fresh insult to the British flag at the hands of perfidious Muscovy.

Billy rushed blindly at his insult, whom he seized by the shoulder, after the manner of his country, preparing to initiate him into the mysteries of the Cornish hug.

The bear, of course, didn't like this, and retaliated after the custom of his race and district. Equally, as a matter of course, Captain Billy Tregear did not like that.

"Here, I say," Billy gasped, rapidly collapsing within the closely closing hug of his adversary, "this ain't wrestling!"

The bear was impervious to argument as on former occasions. To his horror, Billy felt very sharp fangs entering portions of his torso. It was a pity he had not better studied the Russian character.

"Here, I say! You're a clauwing me. This ain't fair! Help! Murder!"

Billy's eyes rolled wildly in search of probable rescue among the terror-stricken spectators. There was no help in sight. In the midst of his agony he looked upwards, and saw the monkey, who had not yet been lifted from the seat on the coach to which his master had tied him. There was hope yet. Victory had already decided against Billy. The British flag was nowhere. Prompt capitulation was the only safety. With the remnant of breath left to him, he screamed out imploringly to the monkey:

"I say, young gentleman, speak to your father in his own language, and tell him if he'll loose go I'll ax his pardon."

The story always finished here. At the time of my first becoming acquainted with it, Captain Billy Tregear was reported to be still alive and prosperous. I never learnt how he got out of Mr. Bear's clutches, and conjecture fails to suggest a probable means of his extrication. But I never like to inquire too closely into the reality of good stories. They always come out from the fire of scrutiny singed, like Michaelmas geese, of their feathery glories. I have not yet got over the pain of discovering, a few months ago, that Rob Roy was not a dirty sheep-stealer, but that he sold a fight to the English government in the great Scottish rebellion.—*Exchange*.

MAHOGANY SHIPS.—In consequence of the increasing scarcity of good oak timber for ship-building, the use of Honduras mahogany as a substitute has lately very much increased, both in England and other parts of Europe. M. Arman, the well-known ship builder at Bordeaux, last year made some experiments to ascertain the strength of mahogany, as compared with French oak and teak. A piece of each kind of wood, about four inches square, was placed across the machine used for proving chain cable, and a piece of chain was attached to a ring placed in the center of it. A strain being laid on, the oak broke under a force of 1,800 kilograms; the teak with that of 3,300; and the Honduras mahogany of 3,400. The oak and teak appeared as if crushed, but without a complete disjunction of the fibres: the mahogany showed long splinters, indicating a much larger grain or fibre than the others. M. Arman considered this result as a conclusive proof that mahogany is superior for many kinds of ship-building purposes, though it is less flexible than good French oak. M. M. & Son, builders at Rouen, give the result of using mahogany in a vessel which they had built, the *Adèle*, just returned from a long voyage. The captain, in a letter to the builders, gives a most satisfactory account of the state of the vessel, and expresses his decided opinion that the use of oak in ship building may be advantageously replaced by mahogany.—*The London Builder*.

The Colonel's Mistake.

They have not the Cochin water in Quagville; and Colonel Foot has no cistern. The water in his well is hard, and will not 'wash.' Neither is it very good to drink—at all events, the colonel seldom tastes it, but always, when he is thirsty, walks over to the Quagville House, where the water is much better, either because there is less lime in it, or because the young man behind the bar has a way of putting something into it that renders it palatable.

One evening last summer, the colonel was tormented with thirst, and drank a good deal of the tavern water, while the bar-tender's peculiar ingredient in it, before returning home. He reached his door just in time to escape a pouring rain. Mrs. Foot, who had retired, heard the unsteady footsteps of her husband, upon whom the tavern water sometimes produced an extraordinary effect, and spoke to him.

"My dear, is it you?"

"Yes, my dear," articulated the colonel, with affected gayety.

"Does it rain?" said Mrs. Foot.

"Yes, my dear," said the colonel, "it's springing!"—meaning that there was a little sprinkle.

"My dear," said Mrs. Foot, "you have been drinking."

"One glass, my dear," said the colonel.

"Accompanied with others," thickly said the colonel. "But don't thing I drunk."

"Well, if you're not drunk," said Mrs. Foot, "please to set the washbowl out under the eavespot, and you'll have some soft water to wash in, in the morning."

"Yes, my dear," replied the colonel. Flattering himself that he had arranged to catch the rain-water as deliberately and rationally as if he had drank nothing but that innocent liquid for the last twenty-four hours, the colonel undressed and went to bed. The next morning, however, Mrs. Foot was considerably excited in her mind at finding the washbowl in its usual place on the stand.

"You were drunk, my dear, sure as the world," said Mrs. Foot.

"Didn't I put something under the eaves?" replied the colonel. "Then I forgot it. But I wasn't drunk, my dear."

